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All subscriptions should be made payable to 'Irish Biblical Studies'  
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ISSN 0268-6112

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Volume 17, June 1995

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## LUKE'S REDESIGNING OF PAUL: CORINTHIAN DIVISION AND RECONCILIATION (1 CORINTHIANS 1-5) AS ONE COMPONENT OF JERUSALEM UNITY (ACTS 1-5)

Thomas L. Brodie

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While P. Vielhauer<sup>1</sup> and E. Haenchen<sup>2</sup> regarded Luke's portrait of Paul (in Acts) as theologically incompatible with the true Paul (of the epistles), some recent work suggests that the distance between Luke and Paul is not so great. In 1989, M. D. Goulder indicated a close literary connection: Luke's text seems to reflect direct dependence on some of Paul's epistles, especially on 1 Corinthians.<sup>3</sup> In 1993, J. C. Beker closed the theological gap, or at least explained it: Luke had 'redesigned' Paul in view of a later situation; 'within the overall perspective of Luke's salvation-history and the problems he needs to address, his portrayal of Paul becomes intelligible.'<sup>4</sup>

The purpose of this article is to corroborate these recent views - to provide further evidence of Luke's dependence on 1 Corinthians, and in doing so to cast some further light on the theological redesigning.

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1. 'On the 'Paulinism' of Acts,' *Studies in Luke-Acts* (eds. L. E. Keck & J. L. Martyn; London: SPCK, 1968) pp. 33-50.

2. *The Acts of the Apostles* (Oxford: Basis Blackwell, 1971) pp. 112-116.

3. *Luke. A New Paradigm* (JSNT Sup 20; Sheffield: Sheffield University, 1989) pp. 129-146.

4. 'Luke's Paul as the Legacy of Paul,' *SBL 1993 Seminar Papers* (ed. E. H. Lovering, Jr.; Atlanta: Scholars, 1993) pp. 511-519, esp. pp. 517, 519.

Given space limitations, the article limits itself to comparing 1 Corinthians 1-5 and Acts 1-5. Even for these chapters the comparison must be constricted - not a full analysis but an exploratory survey.

## Objections: History and Theology

The idea of a literary link between Luke and some of Paul's epistles is not new,<sup>5</sup> but it has remained stalled. One of the main reasons for this immobility is that the literary question has become entangled with questions of history and theology. Was Luke Paul's travelling companion? And do their theologies fit well together? The answers, some said, were no - thus separating Luke and Paul.<sup>6</sup> And so the literary question followed suit; Luke's writings were separated from those of Paul; it was presumed he did not know any of the epistles.

On closer inspection, however, the objections posed by history and theology are not so strong.

The decisive historical question here is not whether Luke was with Paul but whether he had access to any of Paul's epistles. One cannot presume that he did have such access. But - and this is important in the discussion - neither can one presume that he did not. In fact there is a problem with the hypothesis that Luke never saw any of the epistles. Luke was a *littérateur*; he dealt with writings - and he carefully reviewed sources (Lk. 1,3). He was also an evangelist in contact with the works (or sources) of other evangelists. Above all, he was the chronicler of Jesus and Paul. Did he search out the written sources relating to Jesus but neglect those relating to Paul? In what corner was he marooned that he did not know of the epistles? In what literary impoverishment did this elegant writer live that he could not get a copy of any of them? There is no convincing

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5. Apart from Goulder, *Luke*, see the review of the discussion in M. E. Enslin, 'Once Again, Luke and Paul,' *ZNW* 61 (1970) pp. 253-71.

6. For discussion, see J. A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke (I-LX)* (AB 28A; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1981) pp. 47-51.



explanation for such lack of communication. Hypotheses of isolation do not fit easily into what is known of the evangelist and the early church.<sup>7</sup>

Equally unconvincing is the idea of theological incompatibility. There are indeed real differences between Paul and Luke. But, as said above, Beker's analysis indicates that Luke has redesigned Paul's theology. And L. T. Johnson's brief comparative study of 'salvation' tends to confirm the theological continuity between Paul and Luke.<sup>8</sup>

If history and theology no longer constitute decisive obstacles to a Luke-Paul literary relationship then it is appropriate that the possibility of such a relationship be reexamined.

## **Two Keys to Luke's Approach: Theological Redesigning and Literary (Rhetorical) Imitation**

There are two ideas which go far in solving the puzzle of the Luke-Paul relationship - theological redesigning and literary imitation.

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7. The problem about the relation to Luke to the epistles touches another puzzle - that of the sources of Acts. Despite much research these sources have remained unidentified; see J. Dupont, *The Sources of the Acts. The Present Position* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1964); Haenchen, *Acts*, pp. 24-34, 81-90; E. Grässer, 'Acta-Forschung seit 1960', *ThR* 41 (1976) pp. 141-194, 259-290; 42 (1977) pp. 1-68, esp. 41 (1976) pp. 144-146, 186-194; G. Schneider, *Die Apostelgeschichte: Erster Teil: Einleitung. Kommentar zu Kap. 1,1-8,40* (HTKNT 5/1; Freiburg: Herder, 1980) pp. 82-89. T. L. Brodie, 'Towards Unraveling the Rhetorical Imitation of Sources in Acts: 2 Kgs 5 as One Component of Acts 8,9-40' *Bib* 67 (1986) pp. 41-67; H. Conzelmann, *Acts of the Apostles* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987) pp. xxxvi-xl. Perhaps some epistles are part of the answer to the puzzle about sources.

8. 'The Social Dimensions of *Sōtēria* in Luke-Acts and Paul,' Lovering, *SBL 1993 Sem Papers*, pp. 520-536.

The idea of theological redesigning has been developing for several decades, particularly since redaction criticism began to show how the evangelists changed their sources and shaped their texts in order to develop their own distinctive theologies. Beker's proposal brings that idea a step further: could not Luke - who had reshaped the sources concerning Jesus - also redesign the theology of Paul? Beker is not talking about Paul's epistles (the written documents); only about Paul's theology. But Beker has sown a seed for rethinking the Luke-Paul connection; he has opened the way for a closer look at the two writers.

The idea of rhetorical imitation - the Greco-Roman practice of rewriting or redesigning existing texts<sup>9</sup> - has also been developing slowly for some decades. First it emerged that Luke was both a writer in the Greco-Roman mold and also that he made extensive use of aspects of the Septuagint.<sup>10</sup> Then the two ideas came together: Luke was using Greco-Roman methods on the Septuagint; he was imitating it.<sup>11</sup> Initially, the sense of Luke's imitative work was fairly

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9. For summaries of the complex phenomenon of imitation, see R. McKeon, 'Literary Criticism and the Concept of Imitation in Antiquity,' *Modern Philology* 34 (1936) pp. 1-35; D. L. Clark, 'Imitation: Theory and Practice in Roman Rhetoric,' *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 37 pp. (1951) 11-22. On the classical texts, see T. M. Greene, *The Light in Troy. Imitation and Discovery in Renaissance Poetry* (New Haven/London: Yale University: 1982) pp. 54-80. For a general introduction to imitation and further bibliography, see T. L. Brodie, 'Greco-Roman Imitation of Texts as a Partial Guide to Luke's Use of Sources,' *Luke-Acts. New Perspectives from the Society of Biblical Literature* (ed. C. H. Talbert; New York: Crossroad, 1984) pp. 17-46.

10. See Fitzmyer, *Luke I-IX*, pp. 107, 114-125.

11. E. Plümacher, *Lukas als hellenistischer Schriftsteller* (SUNT 9; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1971) pp. 38-72, esp. 63-4; F.L. Horton, 'Reflections on the Semitisms of Luke-Acts', *Perspectives on Luke-Acts* (ed. C.H. Talbert; Danville, VA: Association of Baptist Professors of Religion, 1978) pp. 1-23, esp. 17-18.



general - limited largely to genre, narrative techniques, vocabulary and style - but, under closer scrutiny, a picture has begun to emerge of a detailed process which systematically transformed whole passages.<sup>12</sup> If Luke redesigned OT writings and Paul's theology, could he not also redesign one of Paul's writings?

That Luke should use 1 Corinthians is understandable. Among all the NT epistles, its implied picture of a community is uniquely vibrant. And its ideas are foundational - 'part of the foundations of christian theology.'<sup>13</sup> If Luke, in searching carefully for sources (Luke 1,3), wanted an authoritative sense of an early community, he could hardly do better than absorb 1 Corinthians. Goulder's evidence<sup>14</sup> is an initial indication that that in fact is what Luke did.

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12. See, by T. L. Brodie, 'Not Q but Elijah: The Saving of the Centurion's Servant (Luke 7:1-10) as an Internalization of the Saving of the Widow and her Child (1 Kgs 17:1-16), *IrBibStudies* 14 (1992) pp. 54-71; 'Towards Unravelling Luke's Use of the Old Testament: Luke 7.11-17 as an *Imitatio* of 1 Kings 17:17-24,' *NTS* 32 (1986) pp. 247-267; 'Luke 7,36-50 as an Internalization of 2 Kings 4,1-37: A Study in Luke's Use of Rhetorical Imitation,' *Bib* 64 (1983) pp. 457-485; 'The Departure for Jerusalem (Luke 9:51-56) as a Rhetorical Imitation of Elijah's Departure for the Jordan (2 Kgs 1,1-2,6), *Bib* 70 (1989) pp. 96-109; 'Luke 9:57-62: A Systematic Adaptation of the Divine Challenge to Elijah (1 Kings 19),' *SBL Seminar Papers 1989* (ed. D. J. Lull; Atlanta: Scholars, 1989) pp. 237-245; 'Luke-Acts [esp. Luke 24:51; Acts 1:9-10] as an Imitation and Emulation of the Elijah-Elisha Narrative,' *New Views on Luke and Acts* (ed. E. Richard; Collegeville: Liturgical, 1990) pp. 78-85; 'The Accusing and Stoning of Naboth (1 Kgs 21:8-13) as One Component of the Stephen Text (Acts 6:9-14; 7:58a),' *CBQ* 45 (1983) pp. 417-432.

13. J. Murphy-O'Connor, *1 Corinthians* (NT Message 10; Dublin: Veritas, 1979) p. ix.

14. *Luke. A New Paradigm*, pp. 132-146.



## The Texts: Introductory Comparison

The structure of Acts 1-5 is not clear; even if some scholars agree, as Haenchen and Conzelmann do, on simply listing the pericopes,<sup>15</sup> the deeper questions of structure (and attendant meaning) remain unresolved. Yet recent narrative criticism, especially by R. C. Tannehill,<sup>16</sup> has helped to show that these chapters have literary unity, part of the larger unity of Luke's work.

Likewise with 1 Corinthians. Notwithstanding the disputes about the integrity of 1 Corinthians,<sup>17</sup> the recent work of M. M. Mitchell<sup>18</sup> has demonstrated that the whole epistle is a single work of literature. One may therefore treat each text (1 Corinthians 1-5; Acts 1-5) as a unity, or at least as integral parts of a larger unity.

To gain an initial sense of the relationship between 1 Corinthians 1-5 and Acts 1-5 the following outline summarizes the texts chapter by chapter (under five sections - a section for each chapter):

| 1 Corinthians 1-5                      | Acts 1-5                          |
|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1 Division, two wisdoms, God's choice. | Unity, two apostles, God's choice |
| 2 Preaching, crucifixion, spirit       | Pentecost, Jesus, Spirit.         |

---

15. Compare Conzelmann's titles, *Acts*, *passim*, with those of Haenchen, *Acts*, pp. xi-xiii,

16. *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation*. Vol. II: *The Acts of the Apostles*, Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990.

17. For summaries of the discussion, see C. K. Barrett, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (2d ed; London: Adam & Charles Black, 1971) pp. 12-17; H. Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975) pp. 2-5.

18. *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation. An Exegetical Investigation of the Language and Composition of 1 Corinthians* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1993) esp. pp. 1-6..

|                                   |                                    |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 3 People are a building...temple. | The temple cure [...you builders]. |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|

|                                 |                                   |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| No boasting - but all is yours. | No boasting; Christ restores all. |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|

|                                                               |                                                              |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4 Apostles: judged and scorned<br>- yet enduring and positive | Peter and John: judged ignorant<br>- yet confident and calm. |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|

|                                            |                                                      |
|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| 5 The man and the woman<br>(a sexual sin). | Ananias and Sapphira<br>(a possessions-related sin). |
|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|

What emerges, therefore, in both texts, is a succession of chapters which, however inadequately, may be placed under five headings:

Unity; two ways and God's choice.

Preaching Christ and the Spirit.

The community and the building.

Apostles under judgement.

The sinful couple.

Such simplification does not do justice to the texts, yet it helps to clarify the stage before proceeding to a more detailed examination.

It is also useful, before examining details, to give an initial sense of how Luke, in reworking 1 Corinthians 1-5, uses theological redesigning, and literary adaptation.

First the theological redesigning. It may seem that the Jerusalem and Corinthian churches are poles apart - one riven by quarrels, the other a model of unity. But despite talk of divisions, 1 Corinthians is governed by 'the rhetoric of reconciliation',<sup>19</sup> in other words, by a desire for unity. Unity was one of Luke's interests,<sup>20</sup> and so he took the Pauline desire for unity and used it as one element in describing a unity that was exemplary. At the same time, since he was interested in showing continuity with Israel,<sup>21</sup> he located that unity in Jerusalem.

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19. Ibid.

20. Beker, *Luke's Paul*, pp. 514-515.

21. Ibid., pp. 516-517.



Further theological redesigning is seen with regard to the image of the building. When, in 1 Corinthians 3, Paul first speaks of the community as 'a building...temple' (ναός, 3,9-17), Luke likewise begins to associate the Jerusalem community with a temple (Acts 3,1-10; cf. 4,11, builders; 4,31 and 6,14, τόπος, 'place/temple'). But the temple in Acts is one which suits Luke's interests - the Jerusalem ἱερόν. In other words, Luke incorporates the idea of the building/temple (including some of its details), but he adapts it to his own larger portrayal of the demise and replacement of the temple in Jerusalem.

Likewise, when the epistle suddenly switches to the sin of a man and a woman (the man with his father's wife, 1 Corinthians 5), Luke follows suit; he switches to an account of a sinful couple (Ananias and Sapphira, Acts 5,1-11). But while he incorporates many elements of 1 Corinthians 5, he adapts the central offence from sex to possessions, in other words, to one of his own interests. Otherwise he is just as severe with Ananias and Sapphira as Paul was in dealing with the incest.

With regard to broad literary strategies, Luke did not allow the epistle to dictate the shape of his own writing. Rather he adapted the epistle; he distilled its essence and used that essence as one component to enrich his picture of the early church.

Apart from distillation, Luke also made other changes, notably positivization and dramatization. Positivization is the turning of what seems negative in 1 Corinthians, especially its account of division, into something positive - the Jerusalem picture of unity. This is not a betrayal of 1 Corinthians. Rather he articulates what the epistle implied - unity is crucial. Luke takes that idea and fills it out.

Dramatization is a further aspect of filling out, of putting historical detail and color into the epistle. In some ways it is a process that is necessary. As scholars know too well, there is a huge vacuum in 1 Corinthians - a world of background which is largely missing, a community which Paul evokes but never clearly describes. Luke fills that gap. By using other sources, he provides his distillation of 1 Corinthians with a clear background (Jerusalem and its events) and his presentation of the community is orderly and relatively full. It is a procedure that corresponds broadly to what he

suggests in Lk. 1,3 - the idea of examining everything and giving an orderly account.

## The Texts: A Closer Comparison

The subsequent analysis does not attempt to be complete. Its purpose rather is to highlight sufficient elements that the question of Luke's use of the epistle becomes worthy of attention. The analysis follows the general outline of the texts (see subsequent facing pages).

### 1. *Prescript/Proemium* (1 Cor. 1,1-3.13b-17; Acts 1,1-5)

Paul greets the Corinthians by speaking of his own call to be an apostle and their call to be holy (1 Cor. 1,1-3). Luke also begins by speaking of a call to apostleship and, implicitly, to holiness: 'Jesus chose the apostles in the Holy Spirit' (Acts 1,2). Thus Luke has the two ideas (apostleship and contact with the holy) but in a form which combines them and which highlights one of his central themes - the Holy Spirit.

Further comparison brings out further points of contact:

1 Cor. 1,1-3.13-17.27-28

Paul, called to be an apostle (ἀπόστολος),

to the church of God (ἐκκλησία τοῦ θεοῦ)...

to those made holy (ἀγιάζω) in...Jesus, called to be holy (ἅγιοι),  
from God the Father (θεοῦ πατρός).

[1,13-17: Were you baptized? I baptized...You were baptized...

ἐβαπτίσθητε...ἐβάπτισα...ἐβάπτισα...ἐβάπτισα...ἐβαπτίσθητε].

[1,27-28: God chose...chose...chose, ἐξελέξατο... ἐξελέξατο...  
ἐξελέξατο].

Acts 1,1-5

To Theophilus (θεό- φίλος, 'friend of God'),

about all Jesus did...commanding the apostles (ἀποστόλοι)

whom he chose (ἐξελέξατο) through the Holy Spirit (πνεῦμα ἅγιον)...

saying...the kingdom of God (θεοῦ)...the promise of the Father (πατρός);

'John baptized...You will be baptized (ἐβάπτισεν...βαπτισθήσεσθε)  
in the Holy Spirit (πνεῦμα ἅγιον)...



1 Corinthians is just one component - a transformed component - in Luke's more elaborate and vivid account. The first touch of vividness is the address not to a whole church of God (1 Cor. 1,2) but - building on Lk. 1,1-4 - to an individual friend of God, Theophilus.

The rest of Luke's transformation shows a further tendency towards clarity and individuality. Where Paul had interwoven holiness with Jesus, and God with the Father ('made holy in Jesus,' 'from God the Father'), Luke adds distinctiveness and color. In place of two references to holiness ('make holy,' 'holy') he speaks twice of the Holy Spirit. Instead of 'Christ Jesus' he shows Jesus doing specific things. In place of 'God' he speaks of the more earth-related 'kingdom of God.' And in place of the general wish of 'grace and peace from...the Father' there is a specific 'promise of the Father' to be given in Jerusalem before many days. Luke has added individuality and action. He has dramatized Paul, and vividly.<sup>22</sup>

Concerning the repeated mention of baptism ('I baptized...You were baptized,' 1 Cor. 1,13-17; 'John baptized...You will be baptized, Acts 1,5) it seems probable, given the context, that the references are connected. Apart from the linguistic affinity, both texts imply a contrast between a past ritual (Paul's previous baptizing; John's baptism) and a later process which is more spiritual (Paul's present evangelizing; baptism in the Spirit). But again Luke's contrast is clearer and more colorful.

1 Corinthians 1 ends climactically with the idea of the divine choice: (God chose...chose...chose [ἐξελέξατο... ἐξελέξατο ... ἐξελέξατο], 1,27-28). Acts 1 uses this not as a climax, but as a framework:

Acts 1,1-2: 'Jesus...chose (ἐξελέξατο ) through the Holy Spirit.'

Acts 1,24: 'Κύριε...show whom you have chosen (ἐξελέξατο).'

---

22. For further details about Luke aim of being dramatic and graphic, see Brodie, 'Luke 7.11-17 as an *Imitatio*,' p. 261.

## **2. You Have Received/ Will Receive Power from Above, While Awaiting the Revelation of Jesus (1 Cor. 1,4-9; Acts 1,6-11)**

The Corinthians, says Paul, are both gifted and receptive: God gave them much, and, as well, they receptively await the revelation of Jesus.

Luke has the same two ideas (giftedness, and receptivity towards the revelation of Jesus) but in a more vivid context. The giftedness is from the Spirit (yet to come). And waiting for the revelation of Jesus is linked with the account (drawn from other sources) of the ascension:

|                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                | Kyrie, in this time will you<br>restore<br>(Κύριε εἰ ἐν τῷ χρόνῳ τούτῳ).<br>Not for you to know times,<br>seasons, |
| The grace of God...is given to<br>you;<br>you are enriched in everything                                       | But you will receive power...<br>when the Holy Spirit comes on<br>you,                                             |
| - as the witness (μαρτύριον) of<br>Christ was confirmed in you -                                               | and you will be my witnesses<br>(μάρτυρες)...[Jesus ascends].                                                      |
| awaiting the revelation of our<br>Lord Jesus Christ,                                                           | Why gaze into heaven? This<br>Jesus will come as you saw him<br>going.                                             |
| who will confirm you to the end<br>(τέλος) ), blameless in the day of<br>the Lord (ἐν τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τοῦ<br>κυρίου). |                                                                                                                    |

Luke adapts the reference to eschatological time ('the end...the day of the Lord'): he sets it at the beginning of his passage, in the vivid context of a specific discussion about restoring the kingdom to Israel. Furthermore, he adds a corrective - about trying to know the precise time.



Then he follows the flow of 1 Corinthians. The richness from God becomes the Spirit's power from above. The witness of Christ becomes the apostles' witnessing to Jesus. And, after the ascension, the awaiting of the revelation of Jesus becomes the memorable picture of the apostles who, instead of gazing after Jesus, accepted that he will return.

### **3. Unity: Desired (1 Cor. 1,10-13a), Achieved (Acts 1,12-15)**

Paul now switches to the question of divisions and to the need for unity. Luke portrays unity as already achieved, and so at times his picture is the opposite of Paul's. There are three main elements:

|                                 |                                     |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Avoid divisions among brothers. | Patient waiting (eleven names).     |
| Be of one mind.                 | All of one mind.                    |
| Quarrelling (four names).       | Peter in the midst of the brothers. |

Once allowance is made for the rearrangement - the interchange of the first and last elements - the texts follow one another closely:

|                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| I beseech you, brothers (ἀδελφοί) by the name (ὄνομα) of our Lord that all (πάντες) speak the same (τὸ αὐτό)[with] no divisions in you (ἐν ὑμῖν). | Peter...said in the midst (ἐν μέσῳ) of the brothers (ἀδελφοί) - the crowd of names (ὀνόματα) in the place (ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ) was about 120 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Be joined together (ἦτε κατερτισμένοι) in the same mind (ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ νοί) and the same purpose (ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ γνώμῃ). For I was told brothers (ἀδελφοί)... that there are quarrels(ἔριδες) among you...[four names] | All (πάντες) were persevering (ἦσαν προσκαρτεροῦντες)) with one mind (ὁμοθυμαδόν) in prayer (τῇ προσευχῇ) the women...brothers (ἀδελφοί) In the upper room they were waiting (ἦσαν καταμένοντες) [eleven names]. |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

The final reference (quarrels), again moved to the top, is turned around - thus showing its positive side (patient waiting). The names likewise are turned around - not four which arouse division (Paul, Apollos, Cephas, Christ), but eleven, suggesting harmony (the eleven).<sup>23</sup>

Luke then follows the rest of Paul's text closely, sometimes playing with the wording, and consistently adding vividness and detail. The idea, for instance, of all speaking the same (τὸ αὐτὸ, 1 Cor. 1,10) becomes part of the more vivid picture of all praying in the same place (ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ). And Luke elaborates: about one hundred and twenty people were present.

#### **4. The Contrasting Wisdoms (1 Cor. 1,18-25) and the Contrasting Apostles (Acts 1,16-22)**

Paul now speaks of contrasting wisdoms - the collapse of the false wisdom and the proclamation of the true (Christ - God's wisdom). In Acts, Peter also implies a contrast, a contrast not of wisdoms but of apostles - between the false apostle Judas who acted as guide (ὁδηγός) to those who arrested Jesus (Acts 1,16-20), and the need to find a true apostle, someone who will be a genuine witness to Jesus (Acts 1,21-22).

Both begin with the negative - the false wisdom and the false apostle. Here the process of adding elaboration and dramatic vividness reaches new intensity. Paul speaks of wisdom coming to nothing; Luke tells of how Judas the guide collapsed in a bloody outburst. Thus, Paul's general idea, of a bankrupt wisdom which collapses, finds graphic illustration in the account of the collapse of the impressive Judas - former apostle and guide to those who arrested Jesus (Acts 1,16-17). The fall of the wise has been illustrated by an account of the fall of someone who was knowledgeable.

Paul's text is no more than a starting point for Luke's distinctive account of Judas's fate, yet the epistle makes an important contribution. As well as providing the pivotal idea of a knowledge

---

23. Paul's larger text (1,11-17) contains seven names, but the basic correspondence seems to be between the four and the eleven.

which is bankrupt or destructive, 1 Corinthians also furnishes a partial model for Luke's citation from scripture:

'It was necessary to fulfill the scripture which the Holy Spirit foretold through the mouth of David...

"For it is written (γέγραπται γάρ): For it is written (written (γέγραπται γάρ) in the book of Psalms:

'I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, 'Let his house become a wilderness, and let no one live in it' (Ps. 69,25),

and the cleverness of the clever I and, 'Let another take his will set aside (Isa. 29,14).' " office'" (Ps. 109,8).

In place of parallel poetry from Isaiah, Luke gives a more complex use of parallel poetry from David/the psalms, an adaptation which prepares the way for the heavy use of David and the psalms in Acts 2 (2,25-35). And in place of the abstract ideas concerning wisdom and cleverness, Luke finds quotations which are more vivid: instead of wisdom being destroyed (Isaiah), a house becomes a ruin, empty (Psalm 69); and instead of something (cleverness) being set aside (Isaiah), a picture of someone stepping in and taking over (Psalms 109). Again the images are vivid - the ruined house and the outsider's takeover.

These are the first explicit scriptural quotations in 1 Corinthians and Acts. Furthermore, 1 Corinthians and Acts are the only NT books which introduce their first scriptural quotation with γέγραπται γάρ.

Having spoken of what is negative (the bankrupt wisdom; the doomed guide), both passages then go on to speak of what is positive - God's providence in 'our' preaching of Christ (1 Cor. 1,21-24; Acts 1,21-23). In slightly simplified form the texts are as follows:

|                                                |                                                          |
|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| It pleased (εὐδοκέω) God                       | It is [providentially] necessary (δεῖ)                   |
| to save through <u>our preaching</u> of Christ | that someone become a <u>witness [=preacher] with us</u> |



- Christ as crucified and Christ as God's power and wisdom - someone who was with Jesus from the beginning until his ascension

Luke keeps the opening ideas: providence; our preaching/witnessing. But in the proclaiming of Christ he has made a considerable change: Christ is no longer described in general terms as crucified and as power/wisdom; instead he is Jesus, a specific human whose life can be outlined (beginning from John's baptism until his assumption). Crucifixion and power are still implied - but within the context of a more complete life of Jesus. The result, once again, is more elaborate and more vivid .

### **5. God Chooses the Less Impressive (1 Cor. 1,26-31; Acts 1,23-26)**

Both texts now continue by telling how God chose unimpressive candidates - the ordinary Corinthians (1 Cor. 1,26-31) and the simply-named Matthias (chosen by lot, Acts 1,23-26).

Paul's description is ringing and repetitive, a multi-faceted contrast: 'Consider your call (κλησις)...Not many of you were worldly wise...[or] powerful...[or] well-born, but God chose (ἐξελέξατο) the foolish...the weak...the lowly...so that all humans (πάσα σὰρξ) might not boast before God.'

Instead of a contrast with many facets (wise/powerful/well-born - foolish/weak/lowly), Luke give a simple contrast between two candidates for apostleship:

-Joseph, called (καλέω) Barsabbas, with the added name (ἐπικαλέω) Justus.

-Matthias.

Joseph's outward appearance (by name) was imposing; and by human standards it suggested being called. But it was the simply-named Matthias whom God chose (ἐξελέξατο, Acts 1,24,26). Thus Paul's principle - that God's call does not follow worldly standards - is illustrated in Matthias.

Furthermore, while Paul had said that all humans (literally, all flesh, πάσα σὰρξ) should not boast before God, the prayer in Acts (1,24) gives a complementary truth: the Lord knows all human hearts (καρδιο-γνώστης πάντων). In other words, both Paul and

Luke put humans in proper relationship to God. But Luke has probed more deeply, more internally; he has gone to the root of not boasting: all humans should not boast before God because God knows the very heart of all humans.

## **6. In Spirit and Power: Preaching God's Word (1 Cor. 2,1-5; Acts 2,1-21)**

Paul now turns the focus from the Corinthians to himself and his preaching. In one way he seemed weak, and in preaching God he preached the cross. Yet there was nothing weak about his message; his word was 'in the showing of Spirit and power' (1 Cor. 2,4). In fact, this whole passage (2,1-5) has been entitled 'The Power of Paul's Preaching.'<sup>24</sup>

The next passage in Acts (2,1-21) might be entitled 'The Power of Peter's Preaching.' The Spirit descends in fire, and even though some see only drunkenness (a form of weakness?), yet when Peter preaches, quoting the great vision of Joel, he does so like Paul - in Spirit and power.

Obviously the account of Peter's preaching is much more elaborate than the account of Paul's. For Luke, 1 Cor. 2,1-5 is little more than a starting-point; yet it helps to set the power-filled tone of Acts 2.

## **7. Announcing the Preordained Mystery of Crucifixion and Glory (1 Cor. 2,6-9; Acts 2,22-28)**

Paul now turns from the power of his preaching to its content - the wisdom of God's preordained mystery, something unknown to those who crucified the Lord.

Luke takes this and follows it closely, but instead of separating the preordained mystery (or plan) from the crucifixion, he combines them: the preordained plan contains the crucifixion:

Both passages conclude by quoting scripture, but as earlier (1 Cor. 1,19; Acts 1,16.20), Luke switches from Isaiah to David's psalms and uses a more elaborate text:

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24. Murphy-O'Connor, *1 Corinthians*, p. 17.

We speak a wisdom... (1 Cor. Hear these words:  
2,6).

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>But we speak God's (θεοῦ) wisdom, in mystery hidden (ἀπο-κεκρυμμένην)<br/>which God preordained before (προ-ᾠρισεν ὁ θεὸς πρὸ) the ages((2,7), ...which the rulers did not know; if they had known (ἔγνωνκεν...ἔγνοσαν)<br/>they would not have crucified (σταυρώω)<br/>the Lord of glory (2,8).</p> | <p>Jesus of Nazareth, a man designated by God (ἀπο-δεδειγμένον...θεοῦ; 2,22),<br/>he, given up by the ordained plan (ᾠρισμένη) and foreknowledge of God (προ- γνώσει τοῦ θεοῦ)<br/>you crucified (προσπήγνυμι) )... (2,23),<br/>whom God raised...[from] death.</p> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>But as it is written (καθὼς γέγραπται)<br/>Eye (ὀφθαλμὸς) has not seen, nor ear (οὖς) heard, nor has it entered the heart (καρδία)...<br/>what God has prepared for those who love him (cf. Isa. 64,4; 65,17), (2,9).</p> | <p>Because (καθότι) he could not be held, for David says of him,<br/>I saw the Lord...so my heart (καρδία) was glad, my tongue (γλῶσσά) rejoiced, my flesh (σάρξ) will dwell in hope For you will not abandon my soul in Hades, or let your holy one see corruption. You have made known to me the ways of life...You will make me full of joy with your face (Ps. 16,8-11), (2,24-28).</p> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

As often, Luke's picture is more vivid and detailed. Instead of speaking in a general way of crucifying the Lord of glory (1 Cor. 2,8), Luke tells of crucifying (literally, fastening or nailing) Jesus of Nazareth (Acts 2,23). And instead of a cryptic scripture about something that has not entered human senses (eye, ear, heart), Luke's scripture is much clearer: the senses or body (heart, tongue and flesh) are positively involved and the promise is spelled out.



In line with the tendency to be more clear and vivid, Luke also stresses what is positive and open. Where Paul had spoken of something hidden (ἀπο-κεκρυμμένην, 2,7), Luke refers to Jesus as manifested, designated (ἀπο-δεδειγμένον, Acts 2,22). And where Paul referred to the rulers who 'did not know' (2,8), Luke looks at another side of the same reality - at the God who did know (God's foreknowledge, Acts 2,23).

## **8. Knowing God's Mystery from the Inside - through the (Prophetic) Spirit (1 Cor. 2,10-16; Acts 2,29-36)**

Before analyzing these passages (1 Cor. 2,10-16; Acts 2,29-36) it is useful to set their three main elements in outline:

|                               |                                              |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| God revealed by the Spirit.   | David foretold: God implied resurrection.    |
| We received the Spirit.       | The risen Christ received the Spirit for us. |
| The Spirit knows Lord/Christ. | Jesus is known as Lord/Christ.               |

The first main element is that of revealing or foretelling. Having spoken of God's preordained Christ-centered plan, it is necessary to explain how one knows about it. The answer, for both Paul and Luke, is revelation - revelation through the Spirit (Paul), and revelation through David (Luke). The relationship between the details of the texts is unusually complex:

|                                                                              |                                                                                                                                |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| To us (ἡμῖν)                                                                 | David's tomb is among us (ἐν ἡμῖν)...                                                                                          |
| God (ὁ θεὸς)<br>revealed<br>through the Spirit -<br>the Spirit knows (οἶδα). | So he, being a prophet, and<br>knowing (οἶδα)<br>that God (ὁ θεὸς) swore...,<br>foretold [= revealed] Christ's<br>resurrection |

As Paul says, God revealed to us through the Spirit, and the Spirit knows (1 Cor. 2,10-11). But Luke has filtered that simple idea (of a special knowing) through the history of David (his prophesying and his tomb, Acts 2,30-31). He has also added a reference to the resurrection. Again Luke's text is more specific, more colorful, more elaborate.

Both writers then refer explicitly to the next-main element - the Spirit. Paul says 'we have received the Spirit from God' (2,12, ἡμεῖς...τὸ πνεῦμα...ἐλάβομεν...ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ). Luke refers to the same phenomenon but he inserts the role of Christ as mediator, and refers to God as Father: 'We are witnesses...[Christ] having received the...Spirit from the Father, poured it out' (2,32-33, ἡμεῖς...τοῦ πνεύματος...λαβὼν παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς).

Finally - the third element - Paul makes a contrast between the natural person and the spiritual person (1 Cor. 2,14-16), and Luke makes a more tangible contrast between David and Jesus (Acts 2,34-36). The essence of the contrast is between those who attain the things of God in a special way and those who do not. The natural person does not receive the [gifts] of the Spirit of God (1 Cor. 2,14), and David did not ascend to heaven (Acts 2,34). In other words, in different ways both these natural persons do not attain the gift of heaven.

The spiritual person, however, and Jesus, are both associated with a special knowledge. In the context of the spiritual person, Paul refers obscurely to knowing the mind of the Lord and having the mind of Christ (ἔγνω...κυρίου...Χριστοῦ, 2,15-16); and Luke gives the idea of knowing that Jesus is Lord and Christ (γινώσκέτω...καὶ κύριον...καὶ Χριστὸν, 2,36). Thus both Paul and Luke use the terms 'Lord' and 'Christ' in tandem and in the context of knowing. But, as ever, Luke is clearer.

Overall (1 Cor. 2,10-16; Acts 2,29-36), each writer tells of the revelation of the Christian mystery. However, while Paul gives the theological kernel - the Spirit's revelation of the mysterious divine depths - Luke unpacks the mystery, as it were; he shows how the revelation occurs in the concrete dimensions of time and space, in the circumstances of David and Jesus and Jerusalem.

## **9. Turn to the Spirit and Become One (1 Cor. 3,1-9; Acts 2,37-47)**

Both writers now change focus - from the central mystery to the disposition of the hearers. The Corinthians' disposition leaves much to be desired: essentially they are people not of spirit (πνευματικός) but of flesh (σαρκικός).

The disposition of Peter's hearers is more complex (and reflects further sources), but it contains the same underlying problem: they need to change their way of thinking and become more spiritual: 'Repent (μετανοέω)...and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (ἁγίου πνεύματος, 2,38). In other words, the need to be spiritual (Paul) has become the need to receive the Holy Spirit (Acts).

The issue is not purely internal. What is at stake is unity. The lack of spirit leads the Corinthians to divisive quarrelling. In Jerusalem, however, acceptance of the Spirit leads to radical sharing. in outline:

|                                                         |                                                                |
|---------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| You are not sufficiently spiritual                      | Repent...                                                      |
| you are σαρκικός ('of flesh'; 3,1f).;                   | receive the Spirit (Acts 2,37-40).                             |
| The flesh leads the Corinthians to quarrelling (3,3-4). | Baptism (Spirit) leads those who respond to sharing (2,41-42). |
| The community is like a garden where people are one,    | The believers were together sharing                            |
| where God gives increase (3,5-9).                       | and the Lord added to them (2,43-47).                          |

Some details need more careful scrutiny. It is not clear, for instance, whether the idea of leaving the flesh is echoed in Peter's final appeal: 'Save yourselves from this perverse generation' (γενεά, 2,40).

What is essential in the opening verses (1 Cor. 3,1-2; Acts 2,37-40) is that both texts indicate the need for the hearers to leave their present disposition and to become more spiritual. For Luke, however, the prospect of becoming more spiritual is nearer; the hearers are ready to receive the Holy Spirit. Thus Luke manages, as usual, to be more positive.

Paul and Luke go on (1 Cor. 3,3-4; Acts 2,41-42) to show two sides of the same coin: lack of spirit (πνεῦμα) leads to division (Paul); and receiving baptism (and the Spirit) leads to unity (Acts).

Then Paul becomes more positive. He likens the community to a garden (or cultivated field, 1 Cor. 3,5-9) where there is a spirit of service; one waters and another plants, and both together form a



unity (ἐν εἰσιν, 'they are one,' 3,8). Each does as God gives, and receives as God rewards.

Luke turns this horticultural unity into real life: having spoken of signs and wonders (indicators of God), he recount how 'all the believers were together (ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ) and had everything in common (κοινά)...and they distributed according as anyone had need' (Acts 2,43-45).

For both, the increase comes from God (1 Cor. 3,6-7; Acts 2,41.47):

'But God increased...but God who increases...' (ἡϋξάνεν...αὐξάνων).

'And there were added...And the Lord added' (προσετέθησαν...προσετίθει).

Thus, while Paul protests that spirit and unity are absent (3,1-9), Luke describes a community where the Spirit and unity are powerfully present (Acts 2,37-47).

### **10. Jesus Christ as the Only Foundation of the Living Temple (1 Cor. 3,10-17; Acts 3,1-10; 4,11-12.16)**

Paul now introduces new imagery: he compares the community to a building (οἰκοδομή; ἐπ-οικοδομέω, 'build upon;' ναός, 'temple'). Within this building Jesus Christ is the foundation (θεμέλιον) - the one and only foundation that is laid.

Acts also switches to new images - first, the setting of the temple (ἱερὸν) where Peter heals a lame man in the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 3,1-10); and later (4,11-12) Peter's image of builders (οἰκοδομέω). Within Peter's implied building Jesus Christ is, not the foundation, but the head of the corner (κεφαλὴ γωνίας) - the one and only name that is given.

In more detail, the main texts are as follows:

#### **1 Cor. 3,10-17**

You are God's building. According to God's grace given (δοθεῖσάν) to me...I laid the foundation (θεμέλιον)...Let each watch (βλεπέτω) how he builds. For no other foundation can anyone (ἄλλων οὐδεὶς) lay except that laid (τὸν κείμενον), which is (ὅς ἐστιν) Jesus Christ (Ἰησοῦς Χριστός). Whoever builds on the foundation with

gold, silver, stones (χρυσόν, ἄργυρον, λίθους...) - their work will be made manifest (φανερὸν γενήσεται) (1 Cor. 3,10-13).

If the work built...on [the foundation] remains, [there will be] a reward. If anyone's work is burned...they will be saved (σωθήσεται), but through fire (3,14-15)

You are God's temple (ναὸς)...If anyone destroys God's temple (ναὸς)...For the temple (ναὸς) of God is holy (3,16-17).

#### Acts 3,1-8; 4,11-12.16

Now Peter and John went up to the temple (ιερόν)...And a lame man was...by the door of the temple (ιερόν). Seeing Peter...about to enter the temple (ιερόν), he asked for alms (3,1-3).

Peter said, 'Look (βλέψον) at us...Silver and gold (ἀργύριον καὶ χρυσίον) I have not, but what I have I give (δίδωμι) you. In the name of Jesus Christ ('Ιησοῦς Χριστός) of Nazareth, walk.' And...he raised him, and his feet and ankles were made firm, and leaping up, he stood...(Act 3,4-8).

Peter to the sanhedrin: 'The stone (λίθος) rejected by you builders (οικοδόμων) has become the head (κεφαλὴ) of the corner. And in no other (ἄλλῳ οὐδενί) is there salvation, nor is there (οὐδε γὰρ ἔστιν) any other name given (τὸ δεδομένον)...whereby we must be saved' (σοθῆναι) (4,11-12).

Sanhedrin: 'That a notable sign has happened...is manifest (γέγονεν...φανερὸν, 4,16).

Without attempting a full analysis, especially of the more debatable details, some central points stand out:

This is the first time that either 1 Corinthians or Acts focuses on a whole building. (In both cases the focusing is preceded, almost immediately, by a passing reference - to a building, 1 Cor. 3:9, to the temple, Acts 2,46). But then, suddenly, the references to a temple are multiple (1 Cor. 3,10-17; Acts 3,1.2.3.8.10).

The key idea behind the references to the temple is that the old stone building is giving way to a new temple formed of people. This is implied in Paul - at least insofar as he says that people form a temple (1 Cor. 3,16-17). And in Acts, where it emerges that the old temple is doomed (the old 'place,' τόπος see esp. Stephen, 6,13-14;

7,48-49) the focus of prayer shifts to the new community, to their 'place' (τόπος, 4,31).

The idea of a shift from a physical building to people is seen particularly in Jesus. Within the diverse buildings envisaged by Paul and Peter, Jesus holds a key position: he is the foundation (1 Cor. 3,11); he is the head of the corner (Acts 4,11). In other words, instead of describing Jesus as the foundation (at the base), Luke gives a complementary image of leadership (at the top).

Yet Paul's idea of Jesus as the human foundation of a human temple is not lost in Acts. The healing of the lame man - while largely drawn from other sources - is described in a special way. Through 'the name of Jesus Christ' the man's feet and ankles (βάσεις καὶ σφυδρά) were made firm (στερεόω, 'to make firm/solid,' 3,6-7), a healing description which is unique in the NT, and one which - since it means that 'Jesus Christ' puts the man on his feet - corresponds to the idea that Jesus Christ becomes a person's foundation.

Thus, within the context of the old temple, a new foundation emerges - Jesus Christ, who not only establishes the man on his feet, but who, through him, attracts 'all the people' (3,9). The building of the new temple is under way.

### **11. From Disavowing Wisdom to Having Everything (1 Cor. 3,18-23; Acts 3,11-26, Peter's Speech in Solomon's Portico)**

Paul's next words (3,18-23) may seem paradoxical. In effect he says: No false wisdom or boasting (3,18-21a); but everything is yours (3,21b-23). It is almost like saying: You have nought, you have all.

The all is vast: 'All (πάντα) is yours - Paul, Apollos, Cephas, the world, life, death, things present, things to come; all (πάντα) is yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's.'

The two parts of Paul's paradox would appear to have provided one small component for Peter's speech (Acts 3,11-26). As the miracle-working Peter stands in Solomon's portico his first step is negative - to disavow any special power or holiness (3,11-12). Here, as in Paul, there is no false wisdom or boasting.



But then, having thus reduced himself, he gives a speech which in various ways encompasses everything - everything from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob to the prophets' idea of 'the restoration of all (πάντα)' (3,13-21). 'And,' concludes Peter, 'you are the children of the prophets...It was for you God raised up his servant and sent him to bless you...' (3,25-26). As Paul would say, all is yours.

## ***12. If Apostles Are Faithful Witnesses, Human Judgement Does Not Count (1 Cor. 4,1-5; Acts 4,1-9)***

Paul now speaks of the role of apostolic leaders (1 Cor. 4,1-5). If they are faithful servants (ὕπηρέτης, 'servant,' but with the technical meaning of 'official witness'<sup>25</sup>) it does not matter how they are judged humanly. What counts then is faithful witness, not human judgement.

In Acts 4,1-9 that same idea is one component in a vivid drama. Peter and John (two of them, thus constituting witness) teach the people about Jesus' resurrection, and the people believe (4,1-4). But then the apostles are brought before an imposing court - rulers, elders, scribes, high priests (4,5-6) and they are subjected to critical judgement (4,7-9). The clear implication, however, despite the weight of the assembled critics, is that the apostles are not guilty. They have been faithful witnesses, and ultimately this human judging does not count.

The word used here for judging, ἀνακρίνω, occurs ten times in 1 Corinthians, including three times in the present passage (1 Cor. 4,3-4). The only other NT occurrences are in Luke-Acts - including the present passage (Acts 4,9, the first occurrence in Acts).

## ***13. The Plight of the Apostles (before Seeming Rulers): Mentally Foolish-looking and Physically Vulnerable (1 Cor. 4,6-13; Acts 4,13-22)***

In face of the Corinthians, who seem to think they possess the eschatological kingdom ('You have come to your kingdom,' 4,8), Paul describes the plight of the apostles: 'God placed us apostles

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25. Ibid., p. 29.

last...We are fools...weak...without honor' (μωροὶ ...ἀσθενεῖς ...ἄτιμοι, 4,9-10). And there is also physical danger: 'We are hungry...beaten...defamed' (4,11.13). Yet the apostles do not whine or cower: 'We bless...we endure...we speak positively' (4,12-13).

Many of the central elements of Paul's description of the apostles occur in adapted form in Luke's picture of Peter and John as they face the sanhedrin. While the sanhedrin has the appearance of power, the apostles seem unimpressive; they look 'unlearned and ignorant' (ἀγράμματοί καὶ ἰδιῶται, 4,13). They are also physically vulnerable. The sanhedrin threaten (ἀπειλέω, 4,17) them, and even though they decide for the moment not to punish (κολάζω, 4,21) them, it is clear they are in danger. Yet the apostles are neither offensive or cringing. Instead they speak with confidence (παρρησία, 4,13) and calm integrity (4,19-20).

#### **14. ?? A Sharp Change to a Gentler (Household?) Setting (1 Cor. 4,14-21; Acts 4,23-37)**

At the end of 1 Corinthians 4 Paul changes tone. He becomes gentle, speaking like a father to children and telling of significant visits - the sending of the beloved Timothy, and his own visit. (His own visit, however, which depends on God, keeps a suggestion of explosive power).

It is not clear, at least not to the present writer, what, if any, is the connection between Paul's sudden gentleness and the next passage in Acts - the description of community solidarity, both at prayer and in action:

|                             |    |                          |
|-----------------------------|----|--------------------------|
| Suddenly Paul speaks gently | ?? | Back at home: community  |
| to the Corinthians - as a   |    | solidarity in prayer and |
| father to children (1 Cor.  |    | action (Acts 4,23-37).   |
| 4,14-21).                   |    |                          |

Rather than insist on connecting these passages, it seems better to accept that they are not connected, or at least to leave the question open.

#### **15. The Sin of the Couple: Remove the Evildoer! Powerful Judgement by an Apostle Who Was**

## ***Physically Absent from the Crime (1 Corinthians 5; Acts 5,1-11)***

Now the tone changes again, drastically, and this time the affinity between the scenes is striking. Paul is suddenly dealing with a man's incestuous relationship with a woman (1 Corinthians 5), and Peter is suddenly dealing with a man and woman who are cheating (Ananias and Sapphira, Acts 5,1-11). The cheating, however, is not sexual, as in Corinth, but has to do with one of Luke's central interests - possessions. Luke indebtedness to 1 Corinthians 5 - apart from his widely-accepted use of the OT - is confirmed by several connecting details:

The picture of a couple (a man and a woman/wife) is not as common as it may seem. This is the first time that either 1 Corinthians or Acts refers to a couple or uses the singular γυναίκα, 'woman/wife.' Furthermore, in both cases the couple are deeply offensive to the community.

The initial condemnation (by Paul and Peter) is done, in diverse ways, from a distance. Paul, 'absent in body, but present in spirit (πνεῦμα), has already pronounced judgement, as if present' (1 Cor. 5,3). And when Peter meets first Ananias and then Sapphira it is clear, though he was absent from the actual crime, that he already knew the crime, that in some sense he was present in spirit (Acts 5,3.8-9). In other words, Luke has adapted the ideas of ready condemnation and being present in spirit to suit the case of Ananias and Sapphira. In fact, it is precisely on the basis of offending the Spirit (πνεῦμα) that Peter condemns (5,3.9). Again Luke has moved from the idea of spirit to that of the Holy Spirit.

The punishment is lethal: 'the destruction of the flesh' (1 Cor. 5,5); death (Acts 5,5.10).

Satan is involved - in destroying the flesh (1 Cor. 5,5); in filling the heart with lying (Acts 5,3). Thus Satan's role in Acts is brought into line with Satan's role in Luke (Lk. 22,3, the misleading of Judas).

The evil ones are removed away from the community. Twice Paul speaks of removing the evil one (1 Cor. 5,2.13; cf. Deut. 13,6) and twice Luke gives a dramatic account of the sinners being removed, first Ananias and then Sapphira (Acts 5,6.9-10).



## Conclusion

The connections listed here vary from strong to weak, and it is important, when assessing literary dependence, not to insist on what is weak. Insistence on what is weak - whether by someone presenting the evidence or someone opposing it - distracts from the crucial question: is there evidence which is strong, evidence which goes beyond the probability of coincidence?

In this case there is strong evidence. First, there is the extrinsic plausibility: Luke, as someone interested in sources, in the early church and in Paul, could have sought access to a copy of 1 Corinthians.

Secondly, there are the consistent similarities - from themes and images to linguistic details. Some are small, some are weak or debatable, but others are strong. And the similarities are present both in volume and in order (they are spread over most of five chapters, and almost in exactly the same order).

Similarity of order is significant. If five random elements are arranged independently by two people, the chance that the elements will be in the same order is less than one in a hundred. If there are ten such elements the chance is less than one in a million. The number of random elements in the same order in 1 Corinthians 1-5 and Acts 1-5 is debatable, but whatever the details, the overall factor of similar order is striking.

Thirdly, there is the intelligibility and consistency of the differences. The basic idea of transforming an existing text - however alien to modern procedure - finds plausibility in the context of theological redesigning and literary imitation. And the actual differences between the texts are not a meaningless muddle. Rather, they follow steady patterns - adaptation to Luke's central interests, and a persistent procedure of making Paul's text more full, more dramatic, and more vivid.

In the end there are two possible explanations of the data - either an extraordinary series of coincidences, or, more simply, that Luke the *littérateur* used a literary method. The chronicler of the church and of Paul used one of Paul's epistles to a church.

T. Brodie

**Corinthians 1-5 and Acts 1-5**

**A General Outline**

**Gifted From Above;**

**Waiting for the Revelation of Christ**

(1 Cor. 1,1-9; Acts 1,1-11)

- |   |                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Prescript:<br>Paul, called...an apostle of Jesus<br><br>to the church of God..<br>called to be holy<br>Grace...from God the Father...<br>(1 Cor. 1,1-3.13b-17). | Prologue:<br>To Theophilus ('Friend of God'):<br>Jesus chose the apostles...<br>in the Holy Spirit...<br>Await the promise from the Father (Acts 1,1-5).<br>Baptisms: a clear contrast (1,5).<br>Not for you to know times, seasons;<br>you will receive power.<br><br>Ascension...This Jesus will come (1,6-11). |
| 2 | You are enriched in everything...<br>awaiting the revelation of Jesus...<br>to the end...in the day of the Lord<br>(1,4-9).                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

**Unity; the Two Wisdoms/Apostles  
and God's Call of the Unimpressive**

(1 Cor. 1,10-31; Acts 1,12-26)

- |   |                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                         |
|---|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3 | Avoid divisions among brothers.<br>Be of one mind.<br>Quarrelling (four names).<br>(1,10-13a).<br>Baptism: implied contrast (1,13-17). | Patient waiting (eleven names).<br>All of one mind.<br>Peter in the midst of the brothers. (1,12-15).                   |
| 4 | The two wisdoms - false and true:<br>false wisdom is destroyed.<br>true wisdom proclaims Christ.<br>(1,18-25).                         | Two apostles (false and true):<br><br>the false, Judas, has collapsed.<br>the true will witness to Jesus.<br>(1,16-22). |
| 5 | God chose the unimpressive<br>(1,26-31).                                                                                               | God chooses Matthias - not the impressive Joseph (1,23-26).                                                             |

## **The Powerful Preaching of Christ and the Spirit**

(1 Corinthians 2; Acts 2, 1-36)

- |   |                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                     |
|---|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 6 | The power of Paul's preaching (2,1-5).                                                                    | Pentecost and Peter's preaching (2,1-21).                                                                           |
| 7 | Announcing the preordained mystery of the crucifixion of the Lord -and God's unspeakable promise (2,6-9). | Hear about Jesus, preordained to crucifixion and resurrection - and the promise of not seeing corruption (2,22-28). |
| 8 | God revealed the Spirit.                                                                                  | Prophetic David foretold resurrection - whence the Spirit.                                                          |
|   | The Spirit knows the Lord/Christ (2,10-16).                                                               | Jesus is known as Lord/Christ (2,29-36).                                                                            |

## **Flesh Leads to Quarrels, Spirit Leads to Unity**

(1 Cor. 3,1-9; Acts 2,37-39)

- |   |                                                                              |                                                                           |
|---|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 9 | You are of flesh, not spiritual. The flesh leads to quarrelling.             | Repent...receive the Spirit. Baptism (Spirit) leads to sharing.           |
|   | The community: a garden where people are one;<br>God gives increase (3,1-9). | The believers were together sharing;<br>the Lord added to them (2,37-47). |

## **The Building/Temple - with Jesus as Foundation/Head**

(1 Cor. 3,10-23; Acts 3)

- |    |                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 10 | 10The community as a building with Jesus as foundation;<br><br>No foundation other than that laid;<br>on top - gold, silver, stones.<br><br>The work will become manifest. You are God's temple. (3,10-17). | In the temple<br>Peter has no silver or gold, but Jesus becomes a man's 'foundation.'<br>Peter: 'stone...builders...head...<br>...no name other than that given.'<br>The 'rebuilding' of the man becomes manifest (3,1-10; 4,10-12.16). |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|



## Apostles Under Judgement

(1 Corinthians 4; Acts 4)

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>11 No claiming of false wisdom...<br/>no boasting.</p> <p>Yet all is yours: the world, life,<br/>death, all is yours/Christ's<br/>/God's (3,18-23).</p>                                             | <p>In Solomon's portico: Peter<br/>disavows any special power or<br/>holiness.</p> <p>Speech: The prophets told of the<br/>restoration of all in Christ; you<br/>are the prophets' children (3,11-<br/>26).</p> |
| <p>12 Apostles are to be faithful<br/>witnesses of Christ;<br/>human judgement does not<br/>count<br/>(4,1-5).</p>                                                                                     | <p>Peter and John preach Christ<br/>and induce faith;<br/>they are brought to human<br/>judgement<br/>(the sanhedrin, 4,1-10).</p>                                                                              |
| <p>13 The plight of the apostles<br/>(before pretentious Corinthians):<br/>'fools...weak...without honor,'<br/>physically buffeted...unsettled.<br/>Yet blessing, enduring, positive<br/>(4,6-13).</p> | <p>The plight of Peter and John<br/>(before the sanhedrin):<br/><br/>'unlearned and ignorant,'<br/>threatened with punishment.<br/>Yet confident, calm, clear<br/>(4,13-22).</p>                                |
| <p>14 Paul's sudden gentleness<br/>(4,14-21).</p>                                                                                                                                                      | <p>..?? The community at home<br/>(4,23-37).</p>                                                                                                                                                                |

### The Man and the Woman: Remove the Evil from Among You (1 Corinthians 5; Acts 5,1-11)

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>15. The sexual sin of the<br/>man and the woman.<br/>Paul, absent in body but present<br/>in spirit, condemns.</p> <p>Satan's role (destroys flesh).<br/>Destroy the sinner's flesh.<br/>Let him be removed from you.<br/>Remove this evil from among<br/>you.<br/>(1 Corinthians 5).</p> | <p>The possessions-related sin<br/>of Ananias and Sapphira.<br/>Peter, absent from the sin,<br/>condemns as if he had been<br/>present.</p> <p>Satan's role (poisons heart).<br/>Ananias and Sapphira die.<br/>They carry out Ananias.<br/>They carry out Sapphira.<br/><br/>(5,1-11).</p> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

### Abstract

Despite assertions that Paul and Luke are theological incompatible, recent work claims that Luke redesigned Paul's theology (J.C.Beker) and used some Pauline epistles, especially 1 Corinthians (M.D.Goulder).

This paper gives data which support these claims. Luke's description of the Jerusalem church (Acts 1-5) consists to a significant extent of a redesigning of Paul's description of the divided Corinthian church (1 Corinthians 1-5). Luke has used what was implicit in Paul - an ideal of unity - as one component of his account of the early church. Luke's direct literary dependence on 1 Corinthians is indicated by: external plausibility; persistent similarities - of theme, detail, and order; and by the intelligibility of the differences.

T. Brodie

## THE PILGRIM PEOPLE OF GOD: SOME GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

*Rev. Professor S. N. Williams*

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The phrase 'Pilgrim People of God' has long been in vogue in ecumenical discussions of ecclesiology, including those within the writer's own tradition, the Reformed Tradition.

The two New Testament works that most encourage the use of the phrase are 1 Peter and Hebrews. Peter spoke of his readers as 'aliens and strangers in the world' (2.11) and it is under that heading he offers ethical instruction on ruler and subject, master and slave, husband and wife and relationships in general with those within and outside the church. 'Ἐλπίς, used twice in the context of these injunctions (3.5;3.15) and not at all afterwards, is expounded at the beginning of the epistle and Peter's theology of hope in its relation to theology of suffering and of holiness sets the tone for the rest of the epistle. The object of hope is, first, the heavenly inheritance ('imperishable, unspoiled and unfading', 1.4), then 'the grace to be given to you when Jesus Christ is revealed' (1.13) and, finally, just 'God' (1.21).

*In toto* Peter's first epistle looks like a classic exposition of other-worldly hope and concomitant social quietism. Studies of Peter's vocabulary both in relation to the Old Testament (a word like 'inheritance') and the first century background (see Bruce Winter's work) show the possibilities of modifying this claim <sup>2</sup>. Yet the concept of pilgrimage is given meaning in the context of the contrast between the present world of suffering, submission and good conduct and the future hope of victory, coronation and the salvation of the soul. A Pilgrim is a stranger, not destined for the land of passage.

We find the same phrase as we did in 1 Peter when we read again in Hebrews (11.13) of aliens and strangers <sup>3</sup>. Like Peter, Hebrews gives Ἐλπίς a special prominence in comparison with most of the literature of the New Testament. And, as in 1 Peter, the

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<sup>2</sup> E.g. in *Themelios*, 13~3 (1988) Winter discusses social ethics according to 1 Peter (pp.91-94).

<sup>3</sup> Παρεπίδημοί is a word found just in these two texts.



exposition of hope has preceded the designation 'aliens and strangers'. The importance of hope is announced in 3.6 (and see 6.11) but the most specific deliberate statement of its object awaits the beginnings of the unfolding of the high priestly theme. Those who have 'fled to take hold of the hope... have this hope as an anchor of the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf.' (6.18-20). While Hebrews works with an exodus model of the people of God, the high priestly presence of Christ, destined for perpetuity and constituting present possession as well as hope, modifies the model. Hope is certainly not just of future possession (7.19). But it is also hope for what is future (11.1). The soul is anchored above, but it is the soul of a traveller. So the object of hope is present, transcendent and heavenly while the life of hope is the life of *homo viator*, a pilgrimage, journey to a city yet to come 'whose architect and builder is God' (11.10).

As with Peter's letter, citing texts in translation is not good enough to establish something like 'other-worldly hope'. Yet the meaning of the pilgrim people of God as we have come across it in this biblical context seems far distant from the constructions of modern, including Reformed, ecclesiology. Liberation theology has difficulty with these two canonical books<sup>4</sup>(3). And Moltmann, whose work in eschatology has long been influential within and beyond Reformed circles, certainly seems distanced from the reported biblical perspectives. The fullest statement of his ecclesiology was in *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, where first the world, and only then the church, is the object of eschatological promise and orientation. That means both the refusal to separate church and world as 'pilgrimage' often does and the refusal to alienate this present world from the promises of God, in favour of some other world. Peter and Hebrews do not seem to get much of a look in here.

Now obviously contemporary theology does not feel compelled to incorporate the whole range of theological perspectives found in the New Testament into its proposals<sup>5</sup>. So if on

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<sup>4</sup> Admitted in conversation by the liberation theologian, Thomas Hanks.

<sup>5</sup> Whether or not this should be so is a different matter.

examination the concept of pilgrimage in the two books mentioned turns out as it superficially appears, why not just drop it? That is, given the widespread prevalence of the view that we are not obligated to display all the biblical data in contemporary theological construction, why continue to make use of the concept at all, in the name of 'biblical theology'? Why, given this view of Scripture, not just get rid of it. One difficulty in the way of this is Calvin's own incorporation of the theologies of Hebrews and 1 Peter into his own, and Reformed ecclesiology is naturally anxious to enlist Calvin in its cause as far as possible. Indeed, the shift in ecumenical thinking which was the backdrop to Moltmann's *Theology of Hope* in 1964 was the push in the fifties to get eschatology straight and into relation with social ethics. And at that time there was considerable interest in the interpretation of Calvin's eschatology.

One example was Heinrich Quistorp's work published in 1955 as *Calvin's Doctrine of the Last Things* <sup>6</sup>. Quistorp welcomed the eschatological orientation of Reformation theology as a whole but noted too that

the eschatology of Luther and Calvin lacks very largely the cosmic breadth which is characteristic of the Biblical expectation of the end. They fail to do justice to the ideas of the perfection of the new humanity as a whole, of the church in the coming kingdom of God and of the new creation in a new heaven and earth (p.12f).

When dealing with the concept of hope in Calvin, Quistorp spent by far most of the time on the concept of pilgrimage. He expounded it under the themes of life as combat, life as crossbearing and life as pursuit of life eternal. In his discussion of the first of these two, Quistorp cites again and again those phrases of Calvin where he emphasizes other-worldly hope and the contrast between the earthly and the heavenly. But the third section is especially important where he takes Calvin's idea of aspiration toward heavenly and eternal life to summarize his idea of Christian life as pilgrimage. Here we arrive at the famous *Meditatio vitae futurae* of the *Institutes* (111.9). The contrast between *contemptus mundi* and heavenly felicity is

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<sup>6</sup> Lutterworth, London, 1955.

accentuated. Of particular interest for us and post-Evanston eschatology is the description of the relation of eschatology to ethics in Calvin's theology. Eschatology grounds ethics in terms of another world in prospect, purifying our aspirations in the present world. Eschatology encourages a form of *contemptus mundi*. Quistorp maintained that only the Christology and christocentricity of Calvin's theology 'prevented Calvin from lapsing into a certain philosophy of death to which he was perhaps inclined' (p.47). Indeed, Quistorp's defence of Calvin against Schultze's earlier two volumes is interesting. Schultze had followed Ritschl in taking the *Meditatio vitae futurae* to be fundamental in Calvin and in his conception of Christianity, and this made Calvin's theology an eschatology with a negative and world-denying ethic of sinister character. Quistorp's rebuttal was that Calvin's theology had no one centre and that it was wrong to claim for the *Meditatio* such a pivotal role. Yet, while Quistorp claimed that Calvin was ultimately beyond pessimism as well as optimism, he did little to challenge the claim that Calvin's eschatology bred or was associated with a world-denying ethic.

Such a challenge was, however, offered by one who wrote a preface to Quistorp's book, namely Tom Torrance. In the preface, Torrance had claimed that

Calvin's main teaching about eschatology can be formulated by saying that eschatology is the application of Christology to the work of the church in history. It is the understanding of the church and all creation - in terms of the *Regnum Christi*. Calvin's teaching here pivots upon the doctrine of union with Christ. Because we are united to Christ and participate in His risen humanity, eschatology is essential to our faith (p.8).

This emphasis on the risen humanity of Christ had, said Torrance, a double significance. Firstly, it means participation in the new creation to whose renewal we reach out. Secondly, it means participation in the earthly order in the reality and power of that new humanity,

...And it is only through the operation of that new humanity that this wild and inhuman world of ours can be saved from



its own savagery and be called into the Kingdom of Christ in peace and love (p.8).

When Torrance went on to offer his own account of Calvin's eschatology, he insisted that the *contemptus praesentiae vitae* and even the *contemptus mundi* as they surfaced in the *Meditatio* in no way involved depreciation of earthly life but just 'such handling of our present life that its future renewal or restoration is already made to govern the present'<sup>7</sup>. Torrance found the nerve of Calvin's eschatology in the 'analogical transposition of Christology to the whole understanding of the life of the Church' (p.101) and the nerve of the Christology, as he anticipated in the preface to Quistorp, in the doctrine of the new humanity in Jesus Christ to whose risen humanity we are joined. Torrance emphasized the concept of humanity in Calvin. *Humanitas* and *humanité* are constant themes in Calvin's sermons. The distinction between Luther's and Calvin's understanding of the two kingdoms relates to the role of humanity, for the overlap of the two kingdoms, for Calvin, has to do with an emphasis on our earthly humanity and the *iustitia novi hominis*. So Torrance is determined to put talk of pilgrimage and the other-worldliness of the *meditatio vitae futurae* in this context. Though and while we are pilgrims, we need civil and political order as aids to our very humanity (*Institutes* IV.20.2) and while Calvin teaches the *meditatio vitae futurae* he makes it a point of prime importance throughout his works to combine it with teaching 'the unceasing activity of the Church on earth in the growth and extension of the kingdom of Christ' (p.91).

Torrance actually states with even greater vigour the importance of the humanity of Christ in Calvin and in theology generally when he expounds Calvin's eschatology for ecumenical purposes<sup>8</sup>. He returned to the theme of the union with Christ and the humanity of the risen Christ as the crucial issue in Calvin's eschatology and then added:

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<sup>7</sup> *Kingdom and Church* (Oliver & Boyd, London, 1956) p.141.

<sup>8</sup> *Conflict and Agreement in the Church*, vol.1 (Lutterworth, London, 1959) pp. 48-101.

This is a supremely important question today: in my view it is the main issue which divides all theologies and strikes them apart to the one side or to the other. Are we to take the humanity of the risen Jesus seriously or not? (*Conflict and Agreement...*, p.98).

Yet again Torrance emphasized the way faith, in union with Christ, 'reaches out in hope toward the renewal of humanity, to the renewal of the whole earth, of heaven and earth' but he emphasizes even more the importance of such faith-union for our present worldliness. Turning, as he did in *Kingdom and Church*, to the discussion of the magistrate in *Institutes* IV.20, Torrance says that

...eschatology by its very nature injects into the Christian Church on earth and in the midst of history the power and the imperative to live out that humanity, and so extend among men, as Calvin puts it, the Kingdom of Christ (p.100).

Conclusion: 'Let the Reformed Churches of the Alliance learn again the meaning of *the Word made Flesh* and the *Resurrection of the Body*.' (p.101).

Although Torrance ended with an account different from that of Quistorp, he had sought to balance the elements in Calvin's thought and to take at its full force the *Meditatio*. But with a further turn of the wheel, in Moltmann's *Theology of Hope*, there was no such attempt; just the attempt to incorporate Calvin's into his own theology. It is true that it was not Moltmann's job to expound Calvin in a balanced way, but it is instructive to observe his use of Calvin. Moltmann from the beginning declared war on an other-worldly eschatology that produced flight from the world, in the name of a messianic this-worldly eschatology that produced engagement with it. Calvin figures so prominently in Moltmann's opening meditation on hope that one wonders whether Moltmann's 'meditation' echoes Calvin's *Meditatio*. Be that as it may, Moltmann cited Calvin in support of two important contentions. The first was the contradiction between future and present, hope and suffering. The second was the

emptiness of faith without hope. The only commentary on Calvin is the summary reassurance that when Calvin spoke of hope hastening beyond this world:

He did not mean by this that Christian faith flees the world.  
But he did mean that it strains after the future (p.19).

When Moltmann cited Calvin on the present-future contradiction he cited the exact remarks from Calvin's commentary on Hebrews that Barth had cited in support of his dialectical theology in *The Epistle to the Romans*, though Moltmann combats precisely such a Barthian perspective in *Theology of Hope*<sup>9</sup>. But it is in the concluding chapter, on the Exodus Church, that Moltmann makes most significant use of the letter to the Hebrews,

Here the title 'Exodus Church' is meant to focus attention on the reality of Christianity as that of the 'pilgrim people of God', as described in the Epistle to the Hebrews: 'Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach. For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come' (Heb.13.13f.) (p. 304).

Yet the development of Moltmann's interpretation of *Christianity within the horizon of the expectation of the kingdom of God* (pp.325ff) owed little or nothing to an exposition of Hebrews or (for those who resist too much exegesis in dogmatics) it did not obviously derive from the concept of pilgrimage in Hebrews. Moltmann's emphases were on hopes for the world, the church for the world, the coming freedom and dignity of humankind, the renewing of the world, the transformation of earth by the coming kingdom of God, 'the eschatological *hope of justice*, the *humanizing of man*, the *socializing of humanity*, *peace for all creation*' (p.329). The point is that Moltmann does not seem to feel accountable, as Calvin did, to the theology of Hebrews nor does he seem to feel

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<sup>9</sup> *Theology of Hope* (SCM, London, 1967) chapter 1. For Barth, see the OUP edition (London, 1968) p.19f.

accountable to the theology of Calvin. This, for the moment, we record just as a fact<sup>10</sup>

Indeed, one should go further. Moltmann cited *Institutes* 111.2.42 (p.20). Calvin does, indeed, have pilgrimage partly in mind in 111.2 (see 111,2,4). But the perspective on present possession of eternal life and what the future holds (e.g. 2.28f; 2.40-43) does not square well with Moltmann's alleged form of this-worldliness and hostile attitude in *Theology of Hope* towards eternity in the present. And, of course, Calvin sustains the distinction between believers and unbelievers in this connection. Moltmann does not reckon with the *meditatio vitae futurae*, which certainly reads just like the sort of thing Moltmann is out to combat. Nor, despite the discussion of *The Calling of Christian in Society* (pp.329 ff) where he looks at the Reformers, is there an attempt to take on Calvin's important discussion of the magistrate and civil order. My point is this: the Calvinist conscience is being lost here in the discussion of the pilgrim people of God, and the shift from Quistorp to Torrance to Moltmann is very instructive in that very decade running from Evanston to *Theology of Hope*<sup>11</sup>(10).

Plenty of water has flowed under the bridge since the sixties. Yet we need, I suggest, to ask whether we have not taken over uncritically from that period a concept of eschatology in relation to the pilgrim people of God that requires revision. I do not undertake here to offer that revision but the following concluding points are meant to be programmatic for purposes of ecclesiology in the Reformed tradition.

1. It is widely supposed that other-worldly hope is inimical to social action. Yet Calvin seems to sustain a version of other-worldly hope and the Calvinist tradition, of all the confessional traditions, was right in the vanguard of socio-political action. We need to inquire about the coherence of Calvin's theology in this respect with a view to re-examining the relation of eschatology to social action.

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<sup>10</sup> For that matter, see the reference to 1 Peter 3.15 (p.22).

<sup>11</sup> These are examples: I am not surveying the scholarship of the period.



2. The opposite of other-worldly hope, this-worldly hope, is an ambiguous phrase. Sometimes people seem to use it to refer to proximate, rather than eschatologically future hopes. In such cases this-worldly hope seems to lead constantly to frustration, disappointment and antagonisms. Where this-worldly hope is understood in a future eschatological sense, the line dividing it from other-worldly hope is thin. If new heavens and new earth follow by divine grace after environmental or nuclear devastation of our planet<sup>7</sup> is that a kind of this-worldly or a kind of other-worldly prospect?

3. A fruitful way of investigating the issues might be to compare Moltmann with Abraham Kuyper in the context of another look at Calvin<sup>12</sup>. In *The Church in the Power of the Spirit* Moltmann attacked Kuyper but of course there is much more to Kuyper than we find there and his legacy today (e.g. in relation to South Africa) is controversial<sup>13</sup>. Undoubtedly, however, Kuyper affirmed a form of profound Calvinist this-worldliness.

4. A personal plea for the rehabilitation of the eschatological perspectives of Hebrews and 1 Peter, integrated into the rest of New Testament and biblical theology. To be sure, this derives from a certain view of the canonical Scriptures, which brings in separate and massive issues. But the epistles constitute an antidote to and offer realism about a situation where we all constantly seem to be incredibly frustrated (and consequently irritable and hostile) about and in the global socio-political situation.

S.N.Williams

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<sup>12</sup> One should not over-emphasize Moltmann; Weber and, better, Hendrikus Berkhof, come to mind.

<sup>13</sup> SCM, London, 1977 p.43f. Moltmann's ecclesiology in this work is not explicitly, though perhaps implicitly, geared to the concept of pilgrimage. Note the brief section on pp. 83-85 in comparison with *Theology of Hope*.

## CHURCH ORDER WITHIN METHODISM

*Rev. Donald P. Ker*

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‘The Methodist Church claims and cherishes its place in the Holy Catholic Church, which is the body of Christ. It rejoices in the inheritance of the Apostolic faith, and loyally accepts the fundamental principles of the historic creeds and of the Protestant Reformation. It ever remembers that, in the Providence of God, Methodism was raised up to spread scriptural holiness through the land by the proclamation of the evangelical faith, and declares its unfaltering resolve to be true to its divinely appointed mission.’ (Para. 1, Constitution of the Methodist Church in Ireland.)

Within this constitutional statement of belief, which offers us a vantage point from which to view the question of order in the Methodist Church, we may note a desire both to locate Methodism within the main-stream of Christianity from its earliest days and to define the Church with a view to its mission.

Both concerns have their roots in John Wesley. It is important to remember that he remained an Anglican to the end of his life and did not have deliberately schismatic intentions. But from his reading, his study of scripture and his experience of God he came to hold two very different visions of the Church at one and the same time, neither of which, to his mind, contradicted Article 19 of the 39 Articles (which defines the visible Church of Christ as ‘a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments be duly ministered according to Christ’s ordinance in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same’):

‘On the one hand he recognised the historical institution, organically linked to the apostolic church by a succession of bishops and inherited customs, served by a priestly caste who duly expounded the Bible and administered the sacraments in such a way as to preserve the ancient traditions on behalf of all who were made members by baptism. On the other hand the church was a fellowship of believers who shared both the apostolic experience of God’s living presence and also a desire to bring others into this same personal experience by whatever methods of worship and evangelism seemed most promising to those among them whom the Holy Spirit had

endowed with special gifts of prophecy and leadership.' (Frank Baker: 'John Wesley & the Church of England.' Abingdon Press, 1970)

Wesley recognised the tension involved in holding these two visions. He recognised too that the latter vision could tend towards the Church becoming a 'sect', if there was any attempt to insist on unity of opinion or form of worship, and these he resisted. He accepted that within Methodism there would always be those who would claim allegiance without holding a living faith. Nevertheless Wesley attempted to hold the two visions together through his concept of the relationship of the Methodist Societies within Anglicanism as 'Ecclesiolae in Ecclesia'.

However admissible this concept might have been theologically it was, in practice, doomed to failure, in part because many in the established Church were deeply suspicious of the Methodists and in part because those joining the new movement had no sense of belonging to the larger body, or were theologically and sociologically distanced from it. In Wesley's own lifetime Methodists were beginning to become a distinct body. After his death separation from Anglicanism became inevitable.

The history of the relationship between Irish Methodists and the Church of Ireland at the beginning of the nineteenth century, which is somewhat different from that in England, may serve to illustrate the flexibility of approach to church order which was adopted after Wesley's death. In England the Plan of Pacification allowed Methodists to receive the Holy Communion from their own preachers, provided the service of the established church was used. This did not apply to Ireland. Here Methodists were still encouraged to attend and receive the sacrament in the Church of Ireland, or from any Methodists who were also in Anglican orders, one of whom was Rev. Adam Averell. However several Circuits, particularly from the North East corner of the country, (reflecting the strong influence of Presbyterian and Free-Church thinking) petitioned the Conference to be allowed to receive the sacraments from Methodist preachers.

The issue was first formally debated by the Conference of 1814, where deep division over the issue emerged, some being in favour of the move and others deeply opposed to any separation from the Anglican Church (on political as well as ecclesiological grounds).

By 1816 the Conference resolved that, within certain strict conditions, the sacraments might be administered by Methodist preachers. Opposition to this move, particularly in Dublin and the North West, was such that by 1818 the Methodist movement had split and the 'Primitive Wesleyan Methodist Conference' was formed, retaining its connection with the Church of Ireland, with Rev. Adam Averell as its president. The two Conferences remained separate until 1878 when they reunited. The 'Methodist' identity had ultimately remained stronger among the Primitives than their adherence to the Church of Ireland or its hold on them. Dis-establishment in 1870 served to hasten the re-unification.

One might add that in the two Centuries since Wesley Anglicans and Methodists have moved forward from some of the misunderstandings which characterised their early relations, although the task of reconciliation is hardly yet complete. It has to be noted that, just as in 1818, there are some among Irish Methodists who are strongly aware of their Anglican heritage, while others continue to lay emphasis on their Free Church identity.

Such a general approach to church order might be considered as rather pragmatic, and it remains a cause of considerable surprise to some that within Methodism worldwide there are Conferences which practice a threefold order of ministry (most notably in the United States) while others (whose practice has followed that of British Methodism) retain simply a presbyteral structure. This divergence arises not least because the major Methodist concern has been more to recover the spirit of what it understands to be the faith of the New Testament rather than necessarily to reproduce a 'New Testament Pattern' church along tightly defined lines.

At the same time Methodists have worked to develop their theological understanding of the Church. This may most simply be expressed as we note how Methodists understand the words 'One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic'.

'One'

The unity of the Church, which belongs to its very calling, is based upon the Christian 'Koinonia' in the Holy Spirit. That this unity was problematic even from the earliest days is clear from the



New Testament. We have already noted that questions of 'correct' church order were not historically a motivating factor in Methodism's development. Likewise Methodism, though deeply committed to the Ecumenical movement, would contend that any concept of unity must take into account the markedly pluralist character of the Church. Since the Holy Spirit is both dynamic and greater than all our understanding of him we should not expect him to produce monotonously identical structures. On the other hand unity should result in that sense of mutual dependence and solidarity with one-another which is suggested by the image of the 'Body of Christ'.

### 'Holy'

The Holiness of the church is grounded in the discipline of grace which guides and matures the Christian life from its threshold in justifying faith to its fullness in sanctification. Once again here is a tension, since holiness is a gift of God already given, and yet its realisation still has to be striven for, because the Christian is 'simul justus et peccator'. Methodism's concern for 'Scriptural Holiness' is thus a refusal to become resigned to the inevitability of sin, and an openness to God's effective grace leading to personal and social transformation.

### 'Catholic'

The Catholicity of the Church is defined by the universal outreach of redemption, and thus the essential community of all true believers. If Christ is Saviour of all (Jn.12:32) and Lord of all (Phil 2: 10f) then the ultimate scope of the Church cannot properly be less than universal. The converse is also true. The intended Catholicity of the Church is grounded in the universal Saviour and Lord.

### 'Apostolic'

The apostolicity of the Church is ultimately grounded in God's mission to the world, and gauged by the succession of apostolic doctrine in those who have been faithful to the apostolic witness. All the people of God are charged with this message, within their own circumstances. At the same time some members of

the community articulate the message with particular authority. This authority is grounded in the call of God, and involves the recognition by the lay community of those so called. It is highly desirable that there be an orderly continuity of the faith through the generations, but this line of continuity does not, of itself, guarantee the apostolic credentials of the Church, nor is it essential to it.

How is the authoritative voice of God to be heard in the Church? Wesley's starting point as an Anglican was the triad of Scripture, reason and tradition. To this he added the work of the Holy Spirit, testifying to and confirming the Word in present 'experience'. Not that the four elements in the 'Wesleyan Quadrilateral' thus formed should be regarded as bearing equal weight, for Methodists would wish to affirm that Scripture is always to be placed above all other authority.

It is the responsibility of the whole people of God to order the life of the Church and discern the will of God under this authority. Yet Methodism also recognises the need for 'Episcopate'. Thus within the structure of courts of the Church, while the local (Quarterly) and district (Synod) meetings have some authority within their own areas it is their duty always to act in accord with the mind of the Conference, the national body which is the final authority within the Church with regard to all questions concerning the interpretation of its doctrines. Methodism in Ireland holds the balance between the authoritative role of the whole people of God and the teaching function of the ordained by ensuring that the Conference is made up of equal numbers of lay and ministerial representatives.

The W.C.C. report on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry poses an important question which reflects a concern lying at the heart of Methodism: 'How, according to the will of God and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is the life of the Church to be understood and ordered, so that the Gospel may be spread and the community built up in love?'

Within the answer to this question, which must finally be offered by the wider Church, Methodism will look to the variety of structures for Church life which are to be found in the New Testament.



It may well have to learn a new appreciation of the traditional order of much of the Church from the second century A.D., but will also point to the need to be responsive to what God is doing, even if it seems to involve moving beyond accepted structures.

Finally it will point to an understanding of the whole people of God which entrusts to 'laity' as much as to those ordained the responsibility for the spiritual life and growth of people both within and beyond the Christian community.

D. P. Ker

THE MURATORIAN FRAGMENT AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CANON. by Geoffrey Mark Wahneman. Clarendon Press. 0-19-826341-4. 1994. £30.00 Hardback

Since the eighteenth century the Muratorian Fragment has been regarded as representing a list of the New Testament books recognised as authoritative in the Roman Church in the late second century. The name derives from its discovery in 1740 by the archivist Lovovico Antonio Muratori at the monastery in Bobbio, Lombardy. The Fragment itself consists of eighty-five lines and is mutilated at the beginning and the end, (commencing in mid-sentence and ending abruptly.)

Hahneman acknowledges his debt throughout this book to the work of another scholar, Albert C. Sundberg Jr. who first questioned the traditional provenance and date of the Muratorian Fragment in an article in 1973 (see *Harvard Theological Journal* 66. (1973) p.1-41.) Hahneman's twin conclusions in his own work are that the Muratorian Fragment is of Eastern origin (probably Syria) and of later composition (probably late fourth century). This book is well written and sets out in a systematic fashion to both 'tear down and build up'. The various supports for the previous scholarly consensus on the Fragment are torn down and reconsidered in turn, most notably the phrase *nuperrim e(t) temporibus nostris* in relation to the Shepherd of Hermas and the episcopate of Pius (c.140-c.154). Reliance upon this reference for dating purposes is viewed as rash by Hahneman and highly dubious. His explanation is that the phrase is most likely the result of 'the known poor transcription and the suspected careless translation of the manuscript'. (p.72)

The favoured technique in building up new evidence for the later date and Eastern origin is to compare the Fragment with extant fourth-century 'catalogues', the assumption being that the Fragment is also a catalogue. 'Excluding the Muratorian Fragment, there are no catalogues in the Christian canon until the fourth century'. (p.132) It is clear though that the Muratorian Fragment, whatever its date or place of composition, is something more than a mere list of books.

All of these arguments impinge upon the subject of the development of the New Testament Canon and no scholar, or teacher, can afford to ignore the challenge posed by Hahneman. Arguments and counter arguments are lucidly outlined and whether one is convinced or not by his theory, this volume represents a worthy attempt to generate discussion on an intriguing subject.

L.S. KIRKPATRICK.